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SOVIETS DEVELOP NEW HERBICIDE

Soviet scientists have developed a herbicide which, unlike those in use now, is not injurious to men or animals. The new weed killer was developed especially for weeds growing among the various grains.

The Soviet scientist N. Holodny, a member of the Academy of Sciences Ukrainian SSR, discovered some time ago that fertilizer has a poisonous effect when used in large quantities on certain plants. Starting with this premise, experimentation began which finally yielded the new herbicide.

The new weed killer's most valuable property is its "selective" action. It affects only dicotyledonous weeds, such as nipplewort, notchweed, cornflower, mallow, leontodon, etc., and also the sunflower. Monocotyledonous plants, such as the poa, are not affected. Due to this property, the new herbicide can be used effectively and safely for weeding among grains and monocotyledonous plants, since it will not destroy them.

Excellent results have been achieved by spraying grain fields with the new chemical, which is water soluble. Even in minute quantities it permeates the weed quickly, withering its stem and leaves. Further growth ceases. Occasionally, a different reaction occurs. The weed's stem thickens, the plant assumes a deformed, dwarfish shape, and loses its ability to reproduce.

In hot, dry weather, extermination of the weeds takes place within 5-7 days after spraying. A somewhat longer period is required in rainy or cold weather. The compound remains active for 2-3 weeks, during which period newly growing weeds are also destroyed.

Dissemination of the herbicide may be carried out by any of the usual methods, including airplane when large regions are involved.

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Under the direction of Soviet scientists, collective and state farms in the USSR began using the new herbicide in 1950 on winter rye, spring and winter wheat, barley, millet, and rice fields, and also on monocotyledonous forage grasses. The experiment was conducted in 49 collective and state farms covering 11,400 hectares, and in the Kaluga, Tambov, and Moscow regions. Use of the herbicide increased productivity everywhere by 2.6-3.5 quintals per hectare. The Siberian Research Institute for Grain Farming experimented with the herbicide on winter grains sowed in stubble fields, and achieved a great increase in productivity.

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